

## UFW WINS HISTORIC CONTRACT

**HON. GEORGE MILLER**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 11, 2004*

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I wish to call my colleagues' attention to a recent collective bargaining agreement between Pictsweet Mushroom Farms in Ventura, California and the United Farm Workers. This agreement deserves note on several counts.

First, it marks the first time since 1987 that the employees at Southern California's largest mushroom farm have been able to work under a collective bargaining agreement. As a result, 300 workers will enjoy higher wages, increased job security, and a company-paid health plan.

Second, it removes Pictsweet products from the boycott list. Pictsweet was first organized in 1975 and operated under a collective bargaining agreement until 1987, when the plant was bought by United Foods Inc. United Foods was intransigent in its refusal to enter a collective bargaining agreement with the UFW. In 2000, the UFW called for a national boycott of Pictsweet products and that boycott forced the plant to cut production by as much as half. By finally agreeing to deal fairly with its workers, Pictsweet will become a more profitable and productive facility.

Most importantly, however, this contract is the first to result from the enactment of California's law allowing farm workers or growers to seek mandatory mediation for farm labor negotiations that have reached impasse. Pictsweet was adamant in its refusal to negotiate a bargaining agreement. The UFW submitted the dispute to mediation in July and the mediator issued a proposed labor agreement on January 30. The company has decided to proceed with implementation of the mediator's report. As a consequence, the right of workers to benefit from collective bargaining has been preserved and the company has the opportunity to move from intransigent, ideological views of labor relations to pragmatic considerations of how best to work with their workers. Pictsweet workers were among the strongest proponents of the mandatory mediation when it was under consideration. It is fitting that they and their employer are the first to benefit from it.

Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the workers at Pictsweet and President Arturo Rodriguez and the leadership of the UFW for this historic achievement. I also want to commend my colleagues in the California Legislature for developing a model for the rest of the nation on how we can provide workers with a meaningful voice in the determination of their wages and working conditions. Legislation that I have introduced to restore meaningful collective bargaining rights to American workers, the Employee Free Choice Act, includes a similar provision providing for mediation and arbitration of first contracts.

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. LUIS V. GUTIERREZ**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 11, 2004*

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, due to illness I missed roll call votes 12 through 18 that were called February 2, 3 and 4, 2004. I would like the record to show that, had I not been ill and been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall votes 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, and 18.

I was also unavoidably absent from this chamber on March 2 and 9, 2004. I would like the record to show that, had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall votes 32, 33, 42, 43 and 44.

**HONORING THE DEDICATED  
SERVICE OF CARY MASIN****HON. BART GORDON**

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 11, 2004*

Mr. GORDON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the invaluable service and tremendous contributions that Cary Masin has given Tennessee's Sixth Congressional District. Cary has been a dedicated member of my Washington, DC, staff for the past five years.

But she is moving on to greener pastures. Cary's last day is Monday, and although my staff and I are sad to see Cary leave, we are glad she has taken a job that will further her career and is worthy of her incredible abilities.

Cary has proven to be an outstanding legislative assistant on Capitol Hill. Her uncanny insight, hard work and rock-solid research skills have helped me do my job better. Those same abilities have also gained the respect of her colleagues.

Cary is a talented professional who always completes the task at hand, no matter how complicated or tedious. She has truly excelled in the fast-paced environment of Congress. Through it all, though, Cary always took the time to bestow a compliment or kind word to most everyone she met. She will now share her tremendous abilities and experience with her new employer, who should be ecstatic over having found such a fine person.

Thanks for all your help, Cary. You will always have a special place in my heart. Good luck in your new job, and may God bless you in your future endeavors.

**OFFICER MARY ANN COLLURA****HON. STEVEN R. ROTHMAN**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 11, 2004*

Mr. ROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to introduce a bill, at the suggestion of a high school student in my district, and with the support of the entire New Jersey House delegation, authorizing the renaming of the main post office in Fair Lawn, New Jersey, as the Mary Ann Collura Post Office.

After dutifully serving eighteen years as an outstanding officer and a role model in her

community, Officer Collura was fatally shot on April 17, 2003, in the line of duty. Throughout her life, Mary Ann Collura embodied what is best in our communities—she was courageous, kind, and concerned about the world and people around her. Renaming the main post office in Fair Lawn after Mary Ann will help ensure that her legacy lives on.

The fact that a Fair Lawn High School student came up with the idea of renaming the post office speaks volumes about how much Officer Collura meant to the people of Fair Lawn. Officer Collura fought hard for what was right and worked tirelessly each day, risking her life, to make sure the residents of Fair Lawn and their families were safe. The post office redesignation is just one way in which we can honor her life in the Borough she loved.

By renaming the post office in Fair Lawn after Officer Mary Ann Collura, we are ensuring that she will always have a presence in our community. Officer Collura was a beloved and trusted member of the Fair Lawn community, which is why renaming the main post office is fitting.

**HONORING MARILYN BICKEL****HON. RAHM EMANUEL**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 11, 2004*

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate Marilyn Bickel of Chicago on her recent retirement after seventeen years of excellence and dedication as Chief of Staff to Alderman Patrick J. Levar of the 45th Ward.

Marilyn Bickel has served the Chicago City Council and the Jefferson Park neighborhood ever since Alderman Levar was first sworn in on April 16, 1987. She met the Alderman when he was a junior attending St. Patrick High School and began working for him during his first election.

During this time, Marilyn was asked to work with the Polish-speaking community in the St. Constance Parish area and was later given a permanent place on his staff.

Marilyn worked hard to develop close relationships with the many Chicago departmental representatives and always knew the right person to contact for a constituent in need. Marilyn always went out of her way to provide assistance to those who were unable to access alternate means of assistance.

In addition, Marilyn has served as a liaison to local chambers of commerce for Alderman Levar. She calmly dealt with many difficult circumstances, most notably the period following the terrorist attacks of September 11th. In a time of apprehension and doubt, Marilyn worked to console the fears of her fellow Chicagoans, and the residents of the 45th Ward.

Marilyn's family has also been a priority in her life. Her two children, Robert and William, are the proud parents of her grandchildren Bob, Ashley, Debbie and Bailey. In retirement, she will join her husband, Bill Bickel, who retired after a 32 year career with the Chicago Police Department. Marilyn and Bill will now have the opportunity to travel more, something Marilyn has long been waiting to do.

Mr. Speaker, I join with all of the residents of Jefferson Park and the 45th Ward of Chicago in congratulating Marilyn Bickel on her